

RUTHERFORD COUNTY MANAGER

County Commissioners

William Eckler, *Chairman*

Eddie Holland, *Vice Chairman*

Greg Lovelace

Julius Owens

Roger Richard

Carl Classen, *County Manager*

Hazel S. Haynes, *Clerk to the Board*

Richard Williams, *County Attorney*

February 7, 2014

To: County Commissioners

From: Carl Classen, County Manager

Weekly Report Items **Week Ending February 7, 2014**

General:

This is a highlight of items from the previous week. It is not meant to be exhaustive but to inform the Commissioners and Department Heads.

Airport:

The Airport sold 291.88 gallons of 100LL fuel, 827.00 gallons of Jet A and took in \$10,000.00 for prepaid Jet A fuel.

Board of Elections:

The Board of Elections staff has completed a National Change of Address mailing to over 400 voters who forwarded their mail to a new address. A meeting was held with staff from the Cleveland County Board of Elections to assist them since their entire staff has turned over. The Director attended a District Meeting in Iredell County and the Director and Dawn Lovelace attended a meeting in Cabarrus County where ideas on poll worker recruitment and training were shared. Staff has been busy preparing for the opening of filing on Monday, February 10 at 12:00 pm, and processing campaign organization documents for candidates who are already accepting or spending funds.

Building Inspections:

The Building Inspections Department has issued 93 permits totaling \$21,039 in fees. Included in those permits were several additional permits at Horsehead, the MAHEC clinic in Lake Lure, 6 new houses, and the Cliffside Fire Department Substation. The Director has attended various meetings including additional airport tree clearing, State Energy Office, and Horsehead. The Fire Inspector, Clint Houser, completed the last of his Level 1 State certifications and has already begun his work on his Level II's.

Clerk to the Board:

County Commissioners began the week with their February 3rd regular County Commissioners' meeting. The new Granicus software was used for the recording and development of the meeting minutes for the second month. The action list of the meeting has been e-mailed to Department Heads. Several Commissioners attended the Rutherford Soil and Water Conservation meeting on Thursday evening at the Gilkey Clubhouse and the ribbon cutting at Tangy's, the new restaurant on Main Street in Forest City. Adrienne Wallace is the newest employee to join the offices of the Governing Body, County Manager, and Clerk. She will be the Administrative Assistant in these departments, as well as, Public Information Clerk.

County Manager:

The County Manager attended numerous meetings. Mr. Classen attended the Department Heads meeting, met with Rhonda Owens and Peter Gaulin about the new phone system, attended an Economic Development Review, met with Chief Deputy Buchanan, met with the Director of the Bostic-Lincoln Center, attended the Community Project Grant meeting, held several inclement weather management conference calls with Department Heads, met with the County's Contemporary Media Group, met with Matt Burge and Paula Roach, attended a Solid Waste review and update, monthly County Commissioners' meeting, Revenue Department meeting, Airport matters meeting, and the annual County Managers meeting in Raleigh. Additionally, he was interviewed by WLOS regarding the County EMS system.

Economic Development:

The **Executive Director** met with the County Manager to review Economic Development activities, participated in the Board of Commissioners meeting by submitting professional services and local incentive proposals for approval by the Board of Commissioners, met with the County Manager to review CDBG grant opportunities, coordinated efforts to complete and submit building reuse and restoration grant pre-application documents for three active prospects; provided information for state incentive programs for active industrial prospects, began working with staff to prepare documentation for an Industrial Development Fund grant in support of an active industrial prospect and met with Richard Williams to review a local economic development agreement. The **Project Administrator** participated in a webinar for the NC Broadband Pilot Program, made existing industry visits with local companies and conducted numerous follow-up calls to existing industry to touch base and to offer assistance, met with NC Department of Commerce HR Specialist to learn about programs that may provide assistance to existing industry, processed grant documents for an existing industry expansion project and worked with service providers to plan an upcoming existing industry program. The **Economic Development Assistant** prepared the monthly building permits and safety reports, assisted in the completion of three building reuse and restoration pre-application grants, worked with the design firm to get the annual report print ready, began working on One NC applications for two active prospects and assisted in preparing responses to RFI's received.

Emergency Management/Fire Marshal:

The Fire Marshal scheduled an inspection for the Cliffside Area Volunteer Fire Department's new station, worked with GIS on corrections and changes to Service Districts to include the proposed expansion in the Hicks Grove area, attended law enforcement in service training, conducted two fire origin and cause investigations, assisted fire departments on several wild land fires, assisted fire departments by providing required information for grant applications, attended the Mid- Winter Fire Chiefs Conference where staff received training on the revised Insurance Services Office rating schedules. Additionally, staff attended various meetings.

Finance:

The Finance Department has processed and distributed all W-2's and 1099's for 2013. The Director and Assistant Director have continued to meet with the Solid Waste Director and County Manager regarding the current year budget and how to proceed on developing a rate analysis. The Finance Director has worked with Human Resources to update the employee records with the new health insurance rates which were reflected on our most recent pay stub. Finance Office is working closely with Social Services to begin processing LIEAP invoices (over 250 for this week alone).

Human Resources:

The HR Director held meetings to discuss personnel issues, exit interviews, and retirements. Due to the regulations of the Retirement System limiting the number of hours part time employees can work, the HR Director has been working with all Department Heads to make sure the County is in compliance. To accommodate this rule, the Solid Waste Department has hired several part time employees. Welcome new employees Adrienne Wallace (Governing Body) Arnold Tessniar (Solid Waste), Nathaniel White (Solid Waste), Alvin Williams (Solid Waste), David Presley (Solid Waste) Johnny Limerick (Solid Waste) Bill Scherperell (Solid Waste) David Johnson (Solid Waste) Gary McCombs (Solid Waste) Steve Butler (Solid Waste) Charles Greene (Solid Waste) Lloyd Green (Solid Waste) Don Colley (Solid Waste) Perry Smith (Solid Waste), and Bobby Allen (Detention). Tina O'Rourke has moved from part time at the Library to the vacant full time position at the Register of Deeds. Employees who have left the employment of Rutherford County are Deb McCormick (p/t TDA). The HR staff successfully processed the massive number of changes bringing in 2014. The HR Director attended the regular scheduled board meeting on Monday.

Information Technology:

The IT Department has finished the deployment of new phones in each Department and is now working to get the little bugs out. Peter Gaulin, Jill Wilson, Craig Carter, and Mark Crowen are recognized for an excellent job in this process. The Department would like to thank each of you for your patience during this time and continued patience as they fine tune the system. They are working on the caller id issue, that is a problem coming from AT&T and not the phone system, so please bear with them as they continue to find a resolution. We have begun the deployment of headsets in DSS and are working their way around to remaining departments. If you have vacant desks they will take those phones and store them until an employee is hired to fill that position along with their headset.

Since January 15, the IT department has closed 147 track-it tickets with 144 still in process. Please remember to use track-it and there are two ways for your convenience:

Emailing in the following formats:

trackit@rutherfordcountync.gov with VOIP in the subject line for all phone issues.

trackit@rutherfordcountync.gov with MAINTENANCE in the subject line for all maintenance issues.

trackit@rutherfordcountync.gov with anything in the subject line for all IT issues.

or

Website

You can still use the website as you have always used just choose VOIP or MAINTENANCE as the department for phone and maintenance issues and YOUR department for IT issues. This way all orders will route to the correct technician.

Library:

The Rutherford County Library System hosted three “**Sow True Seed: Heirloom/GMO free seed**” programs and had 20 participants in attendance at County Library, 18 at the Haynes Branch and 30 at the Mountains Branch.

On Tuesday, January 14, April Young and Stephanie Long attended a workshop at Pack Memorial Library in Asheville about the upcoming nationwide launch of the *Edge Initiative*. The *Edge Initiative* is an online benchmark assessment tool designed to help libraries evaluate current public technology services. More information about this project can be found at www.libraryedge.org.

Staff at the Haynes Branch offered a program about the library and how it works to 3 kindergarten classes in January with a total of 65 in attendance.

Staff at the Mountains Branch trained 25 volunteers on the new phone system. The first Books & Bites Program on Jan 23 had a great turn out with 25 people attending the luncheon and listening to author John Wood discuss his book, "***The Names of Things***". New officers were elected in January for the Friends of the Mountains Branch Library: President, Nell Madsen; Vice President, Jean Hoffman; Secretary, Heidi Peck; Treasurer, JoAnne Ellingson.

The **2014 Governor's Volunteer Service Awards** nomination form can be picked up at all three county libraries or can be downloaded in the MicroSoft Word format at www.rutherfordcountylibrary.org

Public Works/Planning:

The Public Works/Planning Department saw the first month of 2014 bringing several challenges and they have faced many weather events that were out of the ordinary. The month began with extremely cold temperatures that prompted service calls of frozen plumbing that ruptured, in addition to failing heat pumps and cold office calls. Besides several extreme cold days the County experienced a light snow with freezing temperatures as well, which pressed the delayed opening schedule. During this delay, the Department applied ice melt to many County sidewalks, stairs and parking for safer access to the County's services. Meanwhile, the garage staff was installing snow tires on many ambulances and sheriff's vehicles. Over the past month the garage has additionally had 42 preventative maintenance service calls, 68

repairs, 17 tire service calls and 38 other repairs. Maintenance completed 151 work orders and repaired multiple heating calls due to severe freezing temps in the single digits. They remained committed to assisting IT in completing the newly implemented VoIP system conversion. During January the Department also kept an emphasis on planning with the Director and Project Manager being committed to moving multiple projects forward and participating in various meetings to improve County opportunities such as, the new Community Grant project, planning board activities, Greyrock, Queens Gap, the proposed Southeastern EMS station and assisting the Library Board with demographic data. We have also had phone meetings with NCDENR regarding moving the rail trail improvements forward and Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy regarding trail planning at the Young's mountain property. Three very active projects are underway: the relocation of the Farmer's market, the archeology research at Gilbertowne, and the master plan report for the Biggerstaff Hanging Tree site which will be briefed in the upcoming Commissioners meeting in March. During January the Department completed work with IPDC regarding the Ruth School adaptive reuse plan and continuing to emphasize the transportation issues and priorities for Rutherford County with NCDOT through their STIP process.

Grey Rock: Work has continued to be slow. The stone installation for Project 7, 9 and part of 8 paving was completed prior to Thanksgiving but staff has not had sufficiently warm and dry weather to put any pavement down. It could be toward the end of February before the asphalt is down. No problems have been caused by this but it is an annoyance. Project 8 grading continues at a very slow pace. The freeze thaw cycle has been severe this winter so very little work has occurred. Project 10 clearing is underway by Sisk Grading who is also completing Project 8 which is adjoins Project 10. Project 11 is on hold until March. The site is too difficult and close to a stream to begin now.

Queens Gap: Clary Hood is the contractor on Projects 1 & 2. Work is very slow due to weather. Project 1 clearing is about half completed and staff anticipate beginning grading this week, weather permitting. Staff is dealing with a lot of wet, mushy material due to the freezing at night. Additionally, they have identified a few areas where French drains will be required. Project 2 will not begin until Project 1 is completed or nearly completed.

Revenue Department

The Revenue Department answered 855 phone calls, and assisted 426 citizens who came in to the office (23 being PUV), recorded 30 deeds, transferred 25 and 19 new accounts were set up. Mapping completed one split, one acreage adjustment and created nine new maps. Five new E911 addressees were assigned. Ownership of 25 addressees was updated. The GIS website had 184,328 hits and 109,543 successful searches. Appraisers completed 663 field reviews. Electronic payments consisted of 51 by credit/debit, 168 by website, and 24 by phone. 534 citizens came in to pay at the counter. Enforced collection action consisted of 93 garnishments and nine attachments. 26 deeds were certified. Staff worked 22 overpayments, one bankruptcy payment/issue, four discoveries, 30 releases, and five refunds. 267 pieces of mail were received and processed.

Senior Center:

The Senior Center celebrated Black History Month this week with Black History Trivia and a video of the Rosa Parks Story. February is also National Heart Month. Staff will be wearing red every Friday in February to raise awareness and educate everyone that cardiovascular diseases are the leading cause of death in women. Also, the Senior Center along with Mission Neurosciences and Mission Heart will be conducting a free health education and prevention screening for stroke on February 18th from 8:00am to 12:00pm. The following services/screenings will be offered: blood pressure, cholesterol labs, glucose labs, body mass index, health consulting, stroke risk score, and a free healthy breakfast. This screening is open to anyone 55 and older and you do not have to be a member of the Senior Center to participate, but appointments are necessary. Interested persons must schedule an appointment by calling 828-213-9961 and answering some health questions. Lastly, the AARP Foundation Tax Aide Program began this week on Thursday. This service is for low to moderate income individuals, with special attention to those 60 and over. The trained volunteers will be available, by appointment only, on Thursdays and Fridays through April 11.

Social Service:

The Social Services Department experienced a very busy period throughout January for the Income Maintenance staff as they continue the implementation of NC FAST. There have been numerous conference calls and off site meetings. Staff has been reviewing daily reports to ensure timely work, as North Carolina works to meet deadlines with a USDA

corrective action plan. They are still waiting on word from CMS as to whether the hard launch of Projects 2 and 6 will be postponed. If it is, this will allow the State to work out many defects in the system and do further pilot work before moving on to additional programs. Currently, all work in Food and Nutrition is completed in NC FAST, as well as, intake applications in most of the Medicaid programs.

The agency held its first meeting of the newly formed Leadership Development Program on January 16 at the Rutherford County Community Health Center. There are fourteen employees participating in the year long program, who were selected through an application process that included an essay and interview. The first meeting included the administration of the Myers-Brigg and discussions and activities surrounding productive working relationships. Our Social Work Program Manager, Amanda McGee, who is certified to administer the Myers-Briggs, conducted the training. The next session will held at Facebook and will include a tour of the data center.

The regular monthly DSS Board Meeting was held on January 15 with four board members present. On January 17, Jaclyn Kiger, Health Care Navigator with Pisgah Legal Services, made an informative presentation to staff on the Affordable Care Act. The monthly agency wide supervisor meeting was held on January 22, and on January 23, the Director participated in a strategic planning interview with Duke Life Point as part of their affiliation process with Rutherford Regional Health System.

The Director attended committee meetings and the statewide DSS Director meeting on January 8 and 9, in addition to attending several local board/committee meetings during the month. On January 31, the Director and Program Manager met with staff and participants at Holland House to provide information about DSS programs, answer questions, and address concerns.

The agency published its first monthly newsletter, *The Social Circle*, in February. Sean Wright won a gift card from a local restaurant for coming up with the name for the newsletter. On January 24, the Director and Income Maintenance Administrator met with Milton Butterworth and Jennifer Hoots with Blue Ridge Community Health Services to discuss their working relationship as they acquire management of the Rutherford Community Health Center.

During the week of February 3, the Director attended the Partnership for Children of the Foothills board meeting; the Community Health Counsel; a stakeholders meeting at the Clara Allen Center; met with District 29 Chief Court Counselor, Rodney Wesson, along with the SW Program Manager, to discuss several issues, including improving our collaborative efforts. The SW Manager also attended the JCPC meeting.

Soil and Water:

The Soil and Water Administrative/Education Specialist completed the agenda and information folders and attended the Watershed meeting and the District Board meetings and Awards Banquet. Staff continued working on the District Poster Contest, Computer Designed Slide Show Contest and continued planning the District Awards Banquet scheduled for February 6 at the Gilkey Ruritan Clubhouse. The Department met with staff from the Rutherford Opportunity Center and Forrest W. Hunt to discuss and plan the process for two Outdoor Environmental Learning Centers. Staff attended the Farm City Meeting. The Ag Cost Share Technician attended the Watershed meeting, watershed dams maintenance inspections, and attended the District Board meetings and Awards Banquet. Staff processed a Request for Payment, a contract and completed a plan for a new landowner contact. Staff also participated in an IBeam Conference call, met with a landowner about stream initiative and completed one spot check.

Solid Waste:

The Solid Waste Department served 272 customers, hauled 51 loads from the Convenience Centers and shipped 34 loads to Lenoir. The Director attended meetings this week consisting of the rate review with the Finance Department, the Commissioner's meeting, the weekly Solid Waste meeting with Finance and the County Manager and met with several customers on asbestos related issues. The Solid Waste and Human Resources Departments hired several new attendants for the Convenience Center positions. The ERPC has completed the January meeting and will meet again in February. Staff continues to perform everyday job duties and special projects as the weather allows. The Litter Control Officer has

five active cases of littering under investigation. Eight community service workers assisted this week and the Director is working on the recycling presentation for the CRA conference scheduled for late March.

Tourism:

The Tourism Development Authority has been busy building the volunteer program by meeting with former volunteers, community leaders and stakeholders. The TDA is also creating a customer service training program for use by volunteers and all business owners. Staff held a customer service meeting in conjunction with the Chamber of Hickory Nut Gorge and they hope to do similar training sessions throughout the county. The welcome center staff has been busy visiting local tourism venues and getting to know stakeholders.

Transportation Services

EMS: This week EMS Personnel responded to 165 emergency calls and 62 convalescent calls. A monthly random drug and alcohol test was completed. Administration prepared budget projections and attended the County Commissioner's meeting. EMS was highlighted in the Daily Courier, once for a [patient testimonial](#), and again for moving forward with the [Southeastern EMS station](#). EMS personnel also participated in two training/certification classes: PALS/PEPP, on January 20 and 21, with 16-20 people participating PHTLS, on January 30 with seven participants.

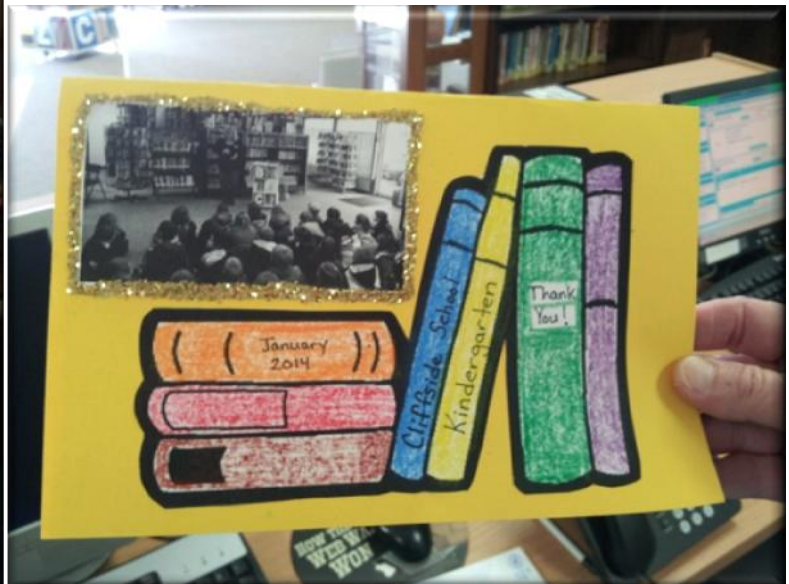
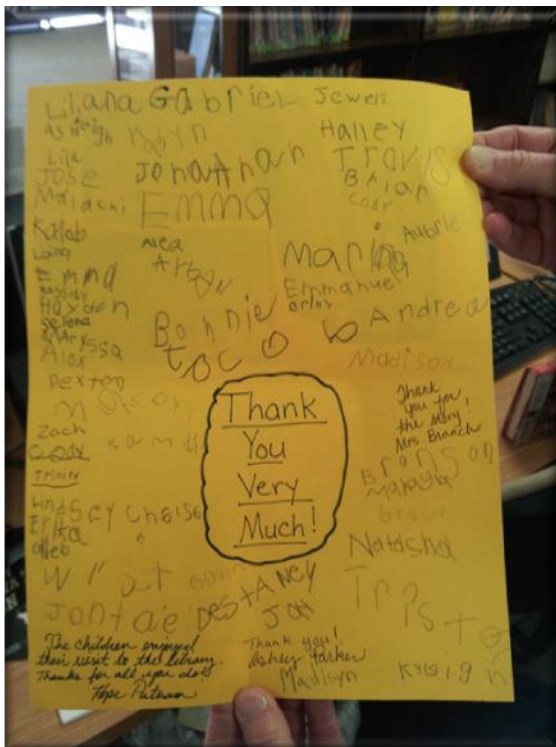
Transit: Transit was closed on January 29 and 30 due to weather conditions. Numbers were down because of those closures. Transit drove 6,142 miles, completed 583 local trips and 41 out of county trips, transported 183 unduplicated passengers and collected \$9,749 in revenue. Transit has been working hard preparing for an NCDOT safety audit in March. The employee of the month is driver Theresa Justice. The January Safety Meeting covered first aid skills and was conducted by Paramedic and EMS Training Officer, Justin Moore

SPECIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Friends of the Mountains Branch Library introduce their newly elected officers.



The Haynes Branch Library hosts an Exciting children's program and receives two very special thank you notes.





Participants listen intently to an “Heirloom and GMO Free Seed” presentation as part of the “Sow True Seed” program.



***Congratulations
to Theresa Justice
She is the
Transit Department’s
Employee of the Month***